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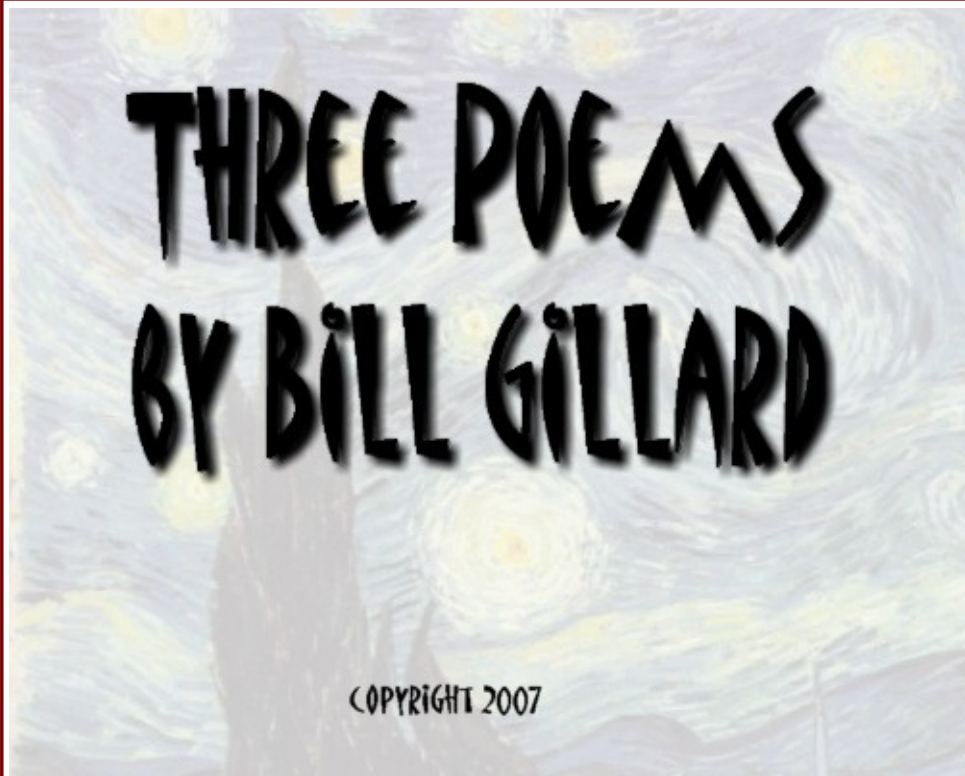
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### **Jeremy, the Boot Camp God**

Your room is not what I expected: I thought  
Of dirty clothes, of dirty magazines  
13 years of too much to handle—

The priests know what to do with  
Boys like you.

Bed made, blank walls, drawers empty, musty and hot.  
Did you live here at all?  
October came—no word from you.  
Report card: abstract, thin.

I am in your bed now, in your made bed,  
The ceiling cracks intersect  
Loose plaster falls  
Water stains.

Even before I can see that the window is painted shut,  
Even before I see the crucifix on the wall above the sink,  
The word "escape" flashes into my mind.  
Where the hell have you gone, Jeremy?  
Where the hell have you gone?

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### **Buffalo Nicole (with a numismatic metaphor)**

Third time staring at this picture  
Railway tracks, blue sky behind  
Three girls heading out to Vegas  
Leaving lovers far behind  
My Buffalo Nicole

The greatest joy, the greatest joy  
The greatest joy is to give joy to the one you love

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Third time staring at this nickel  
She sent me in the mail today  
Proud man, animal both gone  
I feel a lot like this old coin  
My Buffalo Nicole

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## High School English Department Conversation Poem

My friend Hood says poems are like onions,  
and making meaning is the peeling of them.  
Then from the English lounge he strolls out the door to class.

And watching him  
I remember the time  
I planted an onion  
    that-had-sprouted-a-heavy-green-finger-through-the-red-net-cage-in-the-  
    cabinet-next-to-the-stove

I planted it outside in the summer, a brown, shriveled thing  
    in-a-narrow-flower-bed-next-to-my-back-door-plenty-of-midday-sun-for-my-  
onion

The green finger lengthened,  
Found its hand,  
Grew a white flower for a nail.

In September the flower went to seed and I dug up my harvest, after months of care and  
interest, to see what the soil concealed. I dug with my fingers, feeling the round hardness at the  
base of the woody stem. I pulled gently, working the soil, hearing fragile roots snap and feeling  
the stem groan.

Into my hand emerged an onion.

A single  
perfect  
yellow  
Onion.

I've got to tell Hood that reading a poem is nothing like peeling an onion.

With the thing, itself,  
layer after layer, peel what you will, it's just more onion.  
Smaller and smaller  
misshapen and pungent --  
then  
nothing.

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